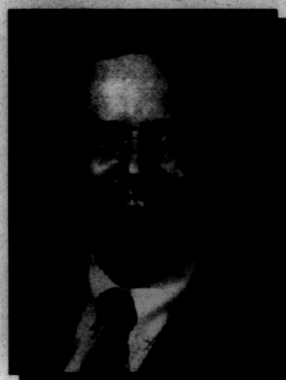
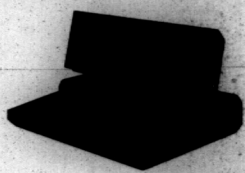


EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



**William H.
Perkins Jr.**
Editor

EDITOR

William H. Perkins Jr.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Tony Martin

EDITORIAL ASSOCIATE

Florence Larrimore

LAYOUT/DESIGN

Joylin Davis

ADVERTISING

Heather Cumberland

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Brenda Quattlebaum

BOOKKEEPER

Betty Anne Bailey

EDITORS EMERITI

Don McGregor

Guy Henderson

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:

Grant Arinder, Ridgeland

Al Green Jr., Bay St. Louis

Ken Hester, Pontotoc

Allan Nix, Laurel

Beverly Pyron, Natchez

Michael Weeks, Olive Branch

Heather Cumberland, secretary

Postmaster: Send changes of address

to The BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box

530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Send

news, communication, and address

changes to The Editor, BAPTIST

RECORD, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS

39205-0530 (601) 968-3800

Fax: (601) 292-3330

E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

VOLUME 125 NUMBER 45

(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4

and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist

Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,

Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$8.35 per

year payable in advance. Economy plans

available for cooperating Mississippi

churches. Periodicals postage paid at

Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State

Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items —

one calendar week prior to requested pub-

lication date. Advertising — two calendar

weeks prior to requested publication date.

The Light in the storm

This issue of The Baptist Record closes out yet another extraordinary year in the annals of Mississippi Baptist life, and life in general. Events have transpired in 2001 that we could not possibly have anticipated as we entered the last few days of 2000.

Who could have guessed at this time last year that we would record the greatest loss of life at the hands of a belligerent foreign enemy to ever occur on American soil? Who knew we would have to collectively endure the grief of nearly 4,000 funerals?

How could we have anticipated that the United States and its allies would be at war with terrorists — cowards, actually, who bid others to die for their cause while they run for cover themselves — and that the war would center on a small, forsaken piece of real estate on the far side of the world governed by a small group of religious thugs?

Life has many ways of surprising us. The shock of unanticipated attack is one of those ways, and it sure does hurt. We know war is not God's best for us.

It seems appropriate to be celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the midst of all this turmoil and tragedy, for it is in just such an environment that he came to offer the peace for which the world so desperately yearns.

It is supremely sad that the answer to peace continues to be rejected in modern times as it was two millennia ago, for he is as willing today as ever to help us (Rev. 3:20). We need only ask him.

Instead, we stubbornly seek to find our own way. To acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Savior is to submit to his will for our lives, and we don't want to even think about that. We want what we want, and we want it now.

Whether it's a second ice cream cone or the destruction of human life in the womb, we want everything our way. We believe

ourselves to be in charge of our own destiny.

No wonder the human race is such a mess. As earthly parents are apt to do on a frequent basis, our Heavenly Father has every right to ask, "Didn't I tell you the right way to do this? Didn't I show you the way? Why won't you listen to me?"

The story is told of the farmer who looked outside his bedroom window one bitterly cold evening and spied a flock of disoriented birds in his yard, dying in the huge winter storm that was blowing through the area. He decided he had to save them.

Braving the howling wind and blinding snow, he managed to open the doors to his spacious, warm barn, but the birds couldn't comprehend what the farmer had done for them. Not a one of them moved.

He got in front of them and tried to lead them into the barn, but they didn't follow. He got behind them and tried to shoo them into the barn, but they scattered. He shouted at them and waved his arms, but that only made matters worse.

Nothing seemed to help. Then he had an idea. He raced back to the barn and turned on the large, bright light inside. Within a few seconds, a couple of birds found their way to the light and the safety of the barn. Within a few minutes, most of the birds had reached shelter.

To the farmer's dismay, however, the remainder of the flock stayed right where

**"I'M READY FOR SOME
BORING NEWS AGAIN."**



they were. Trusting their own instincts and shunning the life-saving light in the barn until it was too late, they died an agonizing death in the snow.

So it is with God and his plans for us. In the midst of our earthly confusion and turmoil, he opened wide the doors of heaven but we didn't come in. He tried to lead us there, but we didn't follow. Somehow we missed all the signals of his concern for us — until he sent us the Light (John 8:12).

Christians have seen the Light, and have been saved. Many more people have not seen the Light, and some will die an agonizing eternal death not understanding the meaning of the Light offered them by God.

Can you think of a better present for Jesus' birthday than to show as many people as possible the way to the Light? Let's take the task he has given us (Matt. 28:18-20) and do what he has asked us to do.

After what he did for us, it's the least we can do for him.

GUEST OPINION:

My other life as Santa

*By Tony Martin
Associate Editor*



to say that I'm scared to fly on that tiny helicopter every year is an understatement. Abject terror would be a better description. The contraption barely holds two of us — the pilot and myself — and has the legroom of a Ford Pinto. There's no door. There's nothing between my Maker and me but thin air and a lap belt. While my rational mind understands that I'm as safe as I would be in a car, especially with an excellent pilot and a impeccably maintained machine, my irrational mind says, "Today is a good day to die." Once we're airborne, I do pretty good, until it comes time for him to land on that narrow dock. He has to straddle the dock with the skids on the chopper and balance it there while I climb out. Mercy.

Once again this year I survived the ordeal. I hunkered down in my chair, asked the "elf" who was helping me to hand me the presents from my bag, and had a great time playing the role. The kids were delighted, and frankly, so was I.

As one young lady climbed into my lap, she studied me critically for a moment, leaned in close, and asked, "Does the real Santa know you're doing this?" I played it cool, and seeing this was an astute young lady, I whispered back, "Actually, he doesn't. I'm just filling in." I winked, and she grinned, and I knew we were safe in sharing a little secret.

This exchange came back to me as I fought crowds at a local department store a couple of days ago. I don't need

to be reminded about the crass commercialism of the holiday season; I've read enough and heard plenty of sermons along those lines. Nor do I need to be reminded what a stressful and heart-breaking time Christmas can be for those of us who've lost loved ones. It can be tough.

Rather, as I watched people worry and bustle their ways through the aisles, trying to find just the right present, I couldn't help but think, "Does the real Jesus know we're doing this?" Of course he does — and what is his response?

I believe God is pleased when we give, and we especially honor him when we give with no strings attached. Christ himself came to earth with no strings attached; his love came with no conditions. Whether we accept that love or not has no bearing on his willingness to give it.

We don't have to wonder about Jesus' response to our actions. He's already responded. Take a look at the manger, juxtapose that view against the Cross, and you know just exactly how much he loves us.

Here's best wishes for the merriest of Christmases and a blessed New Year!

Muslim extremists disrupt Sudan effort

—WASHINGTON (BP)— They managed to gather once, yielding 5,000 decisions for Christ, before the Sudanese government pulled the plug.

Members of the All Sudan Council of Churches had invited evangelist Sammy Tippit to Khartoum to hold a series of evangelistic meetings, as well as a pastors' conference. All the necessary permissions and visas had been received from the government but following the conclusion of the Oct. 31 outreach, which some 20,000 people attended, government security guards told the Christian leaders if they tried to continue the meetings they would be arrested.

Officials explained that permissions were being canceled because Muslim extremists had threatened to attack the stadium if the Christians attempted to carry on.

"Government leaders have investigated the threats thoroughly and believe they are credible and there is a potential for bloodshed at the stadium," Tippit said, according to Crosswalk.com, "so as a safety precaution, they've canceled the meetings, but we can be encouraged that in the opening meeting 20,000 people attended and 5,000 people responded to the invitation to receive Christ. Counselors stayed for two hours after the meeting ministering to those who came to receive Christ into their lives."

The most recent U.S. State Department Report on Religious Freedom, released Oct. 26, states that the government of Sudan continues to restrict the activities of



PERSECUTION INCREASING — The Christian church at Tali in Sudan was recently destroyed by a bomb in an increasing campaign of violence and persecution against Christians in the impoverished country. A burned-out hulk is all that is left of the once-thriving church. More than two million people have died in a 17-year civil war, many are Christians who apparently the focus of an extermination effort by the Sudanese government. (BP photo courtesy of Frontline Fellowship)

Christians. Non-Muslims are forbidden to proselytize, and "apostasy" is a capital offense.

The Sudanese government restricts large religious assemblies, and the treatment of Islam as the state religion contributes to an atmosphere in which non-Muslims are treated as second-class citizens.

"Exacerbated by the civil war, the government and government-supported forces were responsible for intentional bombings of civilian targets, the burning and looting of villages, and the killings, rapes, and arbitrary arrests and detentions of civilians, most of whom were practitioners of traditional indigenous religions or Christians," reports the State Department.

Although the evangelistic meetings were canceled, the

pastors' conference continued with heightened security.

Tippit, of San Antonio, Texas, reported that while all the Christian leaders were disappointed that their freedom of assembly and worship through the evangelistic meetings was halted, they displayed "deep love and joy" in the midst of difficulties.

"These men have been such an inspiration to be around," Tippit said. "They have gone through so much and continue to face great difficulties."

Samuel Nyawelo Ador, director of evangelism for the All Sudan Council of Churches, spoke to the group at the close of the Oct. 31 meeting.

"They cannot stop us," he said. "They may be able to stop our meetings, but they cannot stop what God is doing in our country. Our churches are on fire for God, and that fire will continue to burn in our hearts."

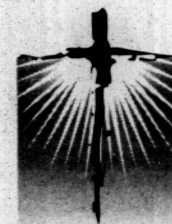
He then turned to Tippit and said, "Don't be discouraged. The Gospel that you have preached has been mightily used of God. Thousands have come to Christ, and now that Gospel will be

multiplied through these leaders. The leadership of the churches in Sudan is present in this meeting today. Now every church will be set aflame by your message."

Tippit was invited to preach in Khartoum by three Sudanese pastors who attended a conference hosted by Sammy Tippit Ministries (STM) in Cairo, Egypt, last November.

The pastors represented the Anglican, Presbyterian, and African Inland churches in their nation. After reporting back to their leaders in Sudan and much prayer, the All Sudan Council of Churches in Khartoum, representing all the major Christian denominations, extended a formal invitation to Tippit.

Before agreeing to hold meetings in any part of the world, Tippit's ministry requests a broad base of churches representing a cross-section of the Christian community to commit to being involved in the meetings and participate in organizing the event.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

**THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE**

THE BAPTIST
Record

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

DECEMBER 20, 2001

VOL. 125

No. 45

WMU begins HEART

—BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)— The Women's Missionary Union (WMU) Foundation, in conjunction with national WMU, has established the HEART Fund to help WMU leaders with emergency ministry needs. The impetus for beginning the fund was the Sept. 11 events in New York City and Washington, D.C., and the many needs that have been identified since then. The fund will allow WMU and the WMU Foundation to respond to requests from WMU leaders in humanitarian emergencies. The WMU HEART Fund, which stands for Humanitarian Emergency Aid (for) Rebuilding Tomorrow, will be managed by the WMU Foundation. Contributions to the fund will be used to make grants, except for a \$250 corpus, which will always remain in the account. Grants from the fund will be awarded by a joint decision of the WMU executive director and WMU national president in consultation with the WMU Foundation president and the foundation's executive committee. "WMU leaders in New York City and Washington D.C., have talked with me about the many needs created by the Sept. 11 terrorists attacks," said Wanda S. Lee, WMU executive director. "In each case, I wanted national WMU to help, but I quickly realized that we had no established way of helping meet these needs," she said, noting that monies held by the WMU Foundation are designated and cannot be used for other purposes. Mary Helen Dixon, interim president of the WMU Foundation, had approached Lee earlier this fall with the idea of the HEART Fund to help WMU leaders in emergency situations. Gifts are tax-deductible and may be made online by visiting www.wmfoundation.org, click on Making Gifts and select HEART fund. Checks may be sent to WMU Foundation, PO Box 11346, Birmingham, AL 35211-0346, or by calling (877) 452-4483.

Looking back

10 years ago

Southern Baptists are advised by the convention's Home Mission Board in Atlanta that they can expect their fourth consecutive year of increased baptisms in 1982, for the first time since the 1947-50 era of growth in baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention.

20 years ago

Plans for a series of simultaneous national revivals in 1986 are approved by state Baptist evangelism leaders during a four-day meeting, shortly after hearing that estimated baptisms for this year are down almost seven percent.

50 years ago

Americans are shocked when President Truman on Saturday, October 20, 1951, announces to the nation that he has appointed Army Gen. Mark W. Clark as full-fledged United States ambassador to the Court of the Pope of Rome, according to A. L. Goodrich, editor of The Baptist Record.

Gulf Coast churches equipping for outreach

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Mendy King is fulfilling the "Who ya gonna call?" role for Gulf Coast Association in Gulfport.

As an intern serving the association, King is responsible for going into local churches to inspire and assist them in developing comprehensive, customized outreach ministries.

The concept is ingenious. King, who is paid a stipend through the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering (MLSMO) for her work on the coast, meets with pastors of local churches who request her assistance.

Armed with several years experience in outreach and church growth, she acts as a facilitator, trainer, and "cheerleader" in that church setting.

According to Tommy Mitchell, missions director for Gulf Coast Association, several churches in the association are facing the challenges of finding themselves in transitional neighborhoods in urban settings.

Mitchell, with an eye toward outreach and church growth, realized there was a significant ministry to be had toward these smaller churches. He talked with David Michel, associate executive director for missions extension at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), and secured the MLSMO funding for the project.

Mitchell became acquainted with King during his pastorate at First Church, Pearl. King, who has an undergraduate degree in accounting, had a passion for outreach and served, in her own words, as a "lay minister" in the Pearl church.

"Tommy was responsible for getting me started," said King. "He's served as something like a mentor for me," she said.

King has worked with 15 churches since she began at Gulf Coast Association in October, 2001. She and her husband are members of Cowan Road Church, Gulfport, where she offers about ten hours a week in service there.

Fernwood Church, Gulfport, is typical of the type of church King serves — located in a transitional neighborhood with a membership of primarily senior adults. The church is 76 years old and is the mother church of Michael Memorial Church in Gulfport.

The church's pastor, Jim Kultau, has been serving the church for about 17 months. A



ORGANIZING FOR OUTREACH — Jim Kultau (left), pastor of Fernwood Church, Gulfport, makes final preparations before visiting prospects. Helping Kultau prepare are his wife Isabel (center) and Mendy King, intern with Gulf Coast Association in Gulfport. King serves the association by offering her expertise in outreach to area churches. (Photo by Tony Martin)

recent graduate of New Orleans Seminary, Kultau recognized the challenges facing the church and knew the church needed a strategy for outreach tailored to their particular needs.

Kultau contacted the association and secured King's services. He set up December 1 as a training day to begin a new outreach program for the church.

"When I begin work with a church, I try to ask general questions," said King. "For instance, I'd ask, 'What have you done that has worked?"

What have you tried that hasn't worked?"

"We've found that just a pastoral visit doesn't work," said Kultau. "People have to be involved. Our congregation is older, so we have think of different ways to involve our people."

Working with Kultau, King spent time in organizing the church records on computer to aid in pinpointing inactive members and legitimate prospects. "You have to start with what you've got," said King. "Outreach only works if it's organized."

"Mendy brought organization and expectation," said Kultau. "Tomorrow (Sunday) I'll be asking for commitments from our members in the morning service. My sermon title is The Marks of a Healthy, Growing Church. I've never used that term with our people before."

Using a modified version of the GROW outreach program, Kultau hopes to involve as many church members as possible in outreach.

Kultau and King both stated that the congregation is agreeable to all that has been proposed so far. The community around the church is largely African-American, but the congregation is willing to reach out to their neighborhood.

King made an interesting comment about the outreach ministry of churches. "You know, organized out-

reach is a result of the church's sin. If we were being obedient to the Great Commission, sharing as we go, we wouldn't need outreach programs. It would take place naturally."

For information on the Gulf Coast Association program, contact Mitchell at P.O. Box 2369, Gulfport, MS 39505. Telephone: (228) 832-4311.

For information on MLSMO programs, contact Michel at MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3233 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 233. E-mail: dmichel@mbcb.org.

Missouri board retains legal counsel

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP and local reports)

— The Missouri Baptist Convention (MBC) executive board voted Dec. 11 to hire an attorney and obtain a legal opinion on whether trustees of five MBC entities acted illegally in voting to give themselves the power to appoint their successors.

The action, taken in response to a motion passed overwhelmingly by members at the Oct. 21-31 MBC annual meeting in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, came after letters from the state of Missouri in Missouri Baptist organization were mailed throughout the state announcing it is closing its doors effective Dec. 31 in view of a breakaway state convention "on the horizon." It now appears Missouri will soon join Texas and Virginia in having competing state Baptist conventions.

The MBC executive board vote is the convention's latest reaction to votes by trustees at The Baptist Foundation, Windermere Conference Center, Missouri Baptist College, the Word & Way state news journal, and The Baptist Home to become self-perpetuating, thus removing any meaningful MBC involvement with each agency.

"We are appointing a subcommittee to retain legal counsel and a legal opinion with the emphasis on restoration and reconciliation and to include Christian arbitration. We're trying to work this out in a Christlike manner," said Bill Curtis, MBC president and pastor of First Church, Ballwin.

The board also took action on motions passed at the Oct. 21-31 meeting.

• A subcommittee was formed to study the feasibility of starting a new newspaper. The action was taken after the board at the October meeting voted to rescind their votes.

• Another subcommittee will study contractual and lease agreements with The Baptist Foundation, the Word & Way, Windermere. The Foundation leases MBC's Baptist Building in Jefferson City. Word & Way maintains offices in the building rent-free.

Contracts, like the one that calls for the executive board to hold its April meeting at Windermere, also will be examined, Curtis said.

• An 11-member search committee will begin to seek a new MBC executive director to replace Jim Hill, who resigned in October. Hill said he could no longer work with the MBC executive board, which is majority-controlled by board members who identify themselves as conservatives.

THE WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE FREE DOG

At one point in my life I owned the most expensive "free" dog in the world. He was a dachshund named Digger. I love dachshunds and it just seemed divinely appointed that Digger and I would get together.

It all happened one afternoon at a funeral I had preached for a member of my church and we had gone in procession out to the cemetery on the edge of town. It was there that I saw this little dachshund running around the edge of the cemetery.

I eased over to some of the men who worked there, actually they were the gravediggers, and I asked them whose dog that was. They said it was just a dog that ran around in the cemetery that somebody had just dropped off.

"It doesn't belong to anyone?" I asked. "Nope," was their reply. I asked if they could catch him for me. They all looked at each other and said, "No, we've tried to catch him before. He can't be caught."

Then I pursued by asking, "If I gave you \$25 dollars could you catch him for me?" "We'll catch him," they replied. As I left the cemetery I went by and told the gravediggers that while they were finishing their work, I would get my car and return to settle up for my new pet.

I could only see the little dog from about 75-100 yards away, but he was a precious toy dachshund that looked to be full-blooded. I knew we would make a good pair!

Within the hour I was back out at the cemetery and sure enough the guys had taken off from their work long enough to catch the little dachshund. I



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

took him in my arms, put him in the car, and set out for home — that is after I paid \$25 bucks for my "free" dog.

As we started home, I then could see that this little fellow had had a rough life. He was scraped up, bumped up, scuffed up, and even had some hair missing. Actually, he looked a whole lot better at 100 yards away than he did up close.

As I was riding along on the way home I decided that I would give him a name in connection with where I found him and the people I had gotten him from — the gravediggers. It seemed appropriate to name him "Digger the Dog."

So, Jim and Digger were on their way home to meet mama and the kids. I barely drove up to the house before the kids were out playing with "Digger the Dog" and mama quickly discovered our new pet had some severe problems.

She was right and consequently, Digger was only at his new home for about five minutes and then it was on to the veterinarian.

I checked him in at the vet's office and they told me that they really needed to keep him a day or two because he needed to get all of his shots. They also needed to thoroughly check him out and diagnose what problems he may have. "Fine," I said.

So, my brand-new little pet and I were separated after less than an hour's worth of friendship. After a couple of days had passed, they called for me to come and pick up Digger.

When I got to the vet's office, I was informed by the vet's nurse that the doctor wanted to have a consultation with me. "Oh no, now what?" I wondered as I nervously sat in the outer office. I could feel my blood pressure rising and my palms sweating as I sat there worrying about the news I was about to receive.

After a sufficient amount of time had passed, and when my anxiety level was at its peak, I was ushered into the consultation room. It was there that the doctor explained to me all the things that my dog had wrong with him and all the procedures he had carried out. Mainly it was an explanation of why I was about to write him a check for \$200.

I paid the doctor and my "free" dog was now worth \$225 and counting. What the doctor told me in the consultation was that my dog, Digger, had among other things a severe case of incurable red mange. At best the vet could retard its growth and Digger might do okay, but at worst it would continue to spread and not be good at all.

When I got home with Digger I explained to the family that it probably would be best that none of us play with him too much because he had some bad skin problems.

Someone, and I think probably it was the mother of my children, asked, "Well, why are we going to keep this dog?" I didn't have a good answer.

Down in my heart I wanted to keep the dog because it was the most expensive animal I had ever owned! Then, to add to all of Digger's medical problems, there was a problem that was equally as troubling — he had a bad disposition! He didn't want to have anything to do with me, the kids, the doctor, the wife, nobody!

He was a wild and unruly animal, but Digger was an expensive \$225 mange-infested, sick dog — so I had to keep him!

Well, I did just that. We kept him for a couple of weeks but soon realized that something had to be done. He was still sick and was not going to get better. His mange multiplied and everybody was fed up with him.

So, what do you do with him? I thought about taking him back out to the cemetery and dropping him off, but that was not a good option. I called the vet and talked with him and he suggested, in light of all the problems that Digger had, that it would be best if he just be put to sleep. I finally agreed and told him that I would bring the dog in.

I took him to the vet's office and the caring doctor came out and met me, got my dog, and promised he would take care of him.

With a compassionate farewell, he told me I could pay the receptionist. I didn't say it but when I was told what I owed, I wanted to yell, "You have got to be kidding!" One hundred dollars! Just to get rid of "Digger the Dog!"

I paid it and drove away, having left behind the most expensive dog I've ever owned. Three hundred and twenty-five dollars for only a few days of companionship with a sick, now deceased, dog.

Why would I tell you this tale? Not just to fill space or to tell a story, but I wonder sometimes when the Lord looks at some of us, what he must think.

Wild as bucks and as mangy as old "Digger the Dog," some of us aren't worth killing. Yet, God loves us so much that he would pay, and pay the supreme price, for us to become something and be somebody in his family.

Like Digger, some of us are hard to live with and more trouble than we can imagine. Still, God loves us and he sees and knows that there is potential, I mean glorious possibilities, in the worst of us!

So he stays with us — nurtures, feeds, heals, and loves us — even though we are truly unlovely!

I could be wrong, but it seems to me that there are more of us that are "Digger the Dog" disciples than any other kind!

No BR on Dec. 27

Due to postal regulations that limit The Baptist Record to 50 issues per year, there will be no issue on December 27. The next issue will be dated January 3. The staff of The Baptist Record wishes for you and your loved ones a joyous celebration of the birth of our Savior and a happy new year.

Blackaby study published by New Hope

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — New Hope Publishers has contracted with Henry Blackaby Ministries to publish an interactive workbook Bible study authored by Henry T. Blackaby and Kerry L. Skinner. The six-week study, titled *Called and Accountable: God's Purpose for Every Believer*, is based on a booklet previously published by New Hope's parent organization, Woman's Missionary Union (WMU).

The latest workbook will contain substantial new writing along with interactive studies designed by Henry Blackaby Ministries. The theme of the study is guiding Christians to discover their call to evangelism. The projected release date is September 2002.

New Hope was established four years ago as WMU's trade publishing entity to bring the organization's missions vision beyond the Southern Baptist audience to believers of all denominations.

Appeal made for increased ministry to Muslims after Day of Prayer

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Christians who participated in the Dec. 16 Day of Prayer for Muslims should follow up by ministering to the physical needs of Muslim refugees in the United States, says a former Muslim who now follows Christ.

"God has sent a huge wave of Muslims to the United States as refugees from Somalia, Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Kosovo, Bosnia," said Khalil Jaloub, a former believer now studying at Southwestern University in Fort Worth.

"When they come here, Christians need to show Christ in a tangible way by meeting their physical needs," he said.

"Muslims who have grown up overseas have seen God as a demanding God who is punishing their sin. They haven't heard the love of God. God also is a God of love and mercy," Jaloub, who works with Muslims for the Crescent World in Fort Worth, said.

"Muslims have seen the true face of God in their own country and become disillusioned about their own faith," he said. "They need the love of God in Christians, and we need to answer questions for their spiritual journey."

Jaloub encourages Christians to pray that God will remove the spiritual barriers that

keep Muslims from understanding the truth about God.

"Christians need to pray for God to break down the walls around Muslim minds and hearts," he said, "and before we attempt to witness to them, we need to get down on our knees and confess our sins before God. Because if we have something in our lives that will hinder God's work, it's not going to be effective."

The peace and love of Christ in a Christian's heart speaks volumes to a Muslim whose heart is empty, Jaloub said.

"Before I accepted Christ, I did not understand the love of God. There is no such thing in Islam," he said. "The only way I understood was through the life of genuine Christian believers. When I saw that, it was really a big magnet for me. The love and acceptance that Christians showed me was what really drew me to Christ."

• Good News for the Crescent World: www.gncw.org

• E-mail Khalil Jaloub: gncw@aol.com

• Fanning flames of faith in the Holy Land: <http://www.imb.org/learn/news/Holyland.htm>

• Search for volunteer missions opportunities in the Muslim world: <http://www.imb.org/vim/step1/search.asp>

JUST FOR THE RECORD



First Church, Brooklyn, held a note burning ceremony on Nov. 18. "The church had made the original note about five years ago to build a new sanctuary. They then added the cost of a church van and a grand piano for the sanctuary to the note to bring the total cost to approximately \$255,000. The note was paid out in full in September," said James Taylor, pastor. Pictured (from left, top row) are John Pilot Lee, Leon Essary, Clifton Evans, Sr., Aaron Fortenberry, Lynn Thompson, and Cecil Burt, deacons; (middle row) Taylor; (bottom row); bottom row, Sable Wilberding; Robert Boone; Kenneth Rigby; Tommy Boone, treasurer; and Dwight Helton, building committee for the new sanctuary.

Terry J. Terrell of Foxworth, will be the featured singer at Calvary Church, New Augusta, for the New Year's Eve sing on Dec. 31 at 7 p.m.

Clifton Church, Scott Association, will have a dedication service for its new church on Jan. 6, from 10:30 a.m.-12 noon. A potluck luncheon will follow the service in the Fellowship Hall.

Gospel singing featuring Sold Out will be held at Barnes Crossing Church, Tupelo, on Dec. 30, at 6 p.m. J. D. Johnson is pastor.



Children of Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch

Pleasant Hill Church, Olive Branch, held its children's mission group recognition service on Aug. 26. Pictured (from left, front row) are Savannah Green, Angelique McCrary, Will McCrary, Morgan Green, Alex Sneed; (second row) Michelle White, Lauren Hamm, Katie Brooker, Addison Green, Vince Gilliam, and Tyler Brooker. Awards were given for completion of mission steps during the year. The program theme focus was the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering.

Drawn Together is a singing group sponsored by the Mississippi State University Baptist Student Union. The group is available to sing for church services, DiscipleNow events, and youth activities. They can be contacted at (662) 323-5761 or 323-1941, email: mb252@ra.msstate.edu or MSU-BSU P.O. Box BU, Mississippi State, MS 39762. Pictured (front row) are Courtney Tarpley, Shreveport, La., and Rebecca Frederick, Columbus, (back row) Aaron Alford, Summit, and Tim Watson, Clouston, Fla.



Children of Lowrey Memorial Church, Blue Mountain

Children of Lowrey Memorial Church, Blue Mountain, recently participated in the children's day service. Pictured (from left, front row) are Massey Richardson, Andrew Bain, Summer Mooney, Leanne Pope, Chloe Richardson, Krystal Mooney, and Sansamaria McDonald; (back row) Kristen Cox, Carson Coombs, Samantha Erwin, Shelby Witt, and Kelly Turner.



Each child at Monument Drive Church, Tupelo, was encouraged to donate \$1 or more as President Bush had requested for the children of Afghanistan. Marie West is the children's church director.



Drawn Together

Mission Mississippi presents the 2002 Statewide Conference on Christian Unity: Grace is Greater Than Race

A conference of various workshops designed to equip Mississippi Christians to bring racial and denominational reconciliation to their communities and to celebrate unity in the Body of Christ.

...And the Governor's Prayer Luncheon

Guest Speaker: Coach Rod Barnes

Head Coach Ole Miss Basketball

Date: January 31 & February 1, 2002

Place: First Baptist Church, Jackson, MS

Call our office at 353-6477 for more information.



LITTLE GIANT MFG. CO.
BAPTISTRIES
WATER HEATERS
STEEPLES
CROSSES
TOLL FREE 1-800-231-6035



ALL SIZES
SALES AND RENTALS

CHURCH BUSES

#1 MANUFACTURER
COMPETITIVE PRICING

SOUTHEASTERN BUS CO.

CLINTON, MS

1-800-423-9826

1-601-924-1982

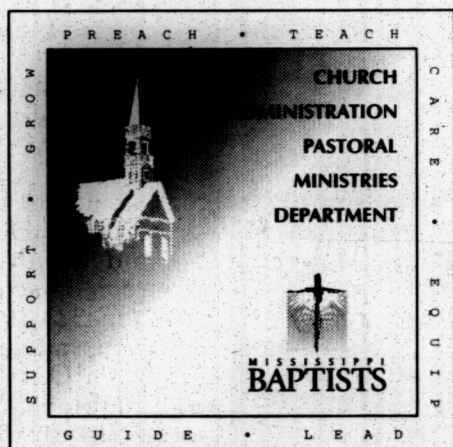
What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

December 20, 2001

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.



CHURCH ADMINISTRATION- PASTORAL MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT

For more info, call the Church
Administration-Pastoral Ministries
Department at 1-800-748-1651 or
601-292-3305.

FOUR EVENTS FOR PASTOR-STAFF AND CHURCH LEADER TRAINING

Church Business Administration Conferences

January 31, 2002, at First Baptist Church, Madison
"Legal Issues: Church Law, Liabilities, and Insurance"

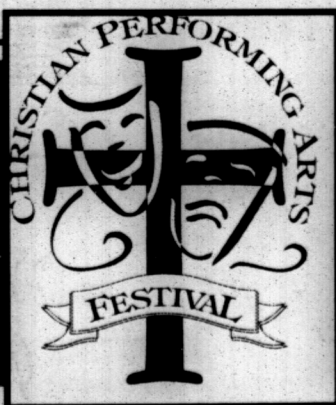
February 1, 2002, at Adaton Baptist Church, Starkville
"Legal Issues: Church Law, Liabilities, and Insurance"

...

One-Day Pastor & Staff Workshops

February 11, 2002, at First Baptist Church, Richland
*"Challenges in Worship, Evangelism and Church Leadership to
Reach Post-Moderns
with the Gospel of Jesus Christ"*

February 12, 2002, at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Grenada
"Keeping Your Heart for God and Ministry"



Christian Performing Arts Festival

April 5-6, 2002

Country Woods Baptist Church, Byram
Cost \$25 (includes T-shirt, snacks, lunch
on Saturday and incredible seminars)

Drama

- Acting (beginners and advanced)
- Directing (beginners and advanced)
- Illusions
- Choreography
- Technical Support

Clowning

- Clowning (beginners and advanced)
- Leading a Clown Troop
- Balloon Sculpting
- Clowning Skills

Puppets

- Puppetry (beginners and advanced)
- Leading a Puppet Team (beginners and advanced)

Church Recreation

- Fun and Games
- New Ideas
- Creative and Fun Classes in the Areas of
Socials, Senior Adults, Children and
General Recreation

Youth Ministry

- Training Youth to be Leaders
- Training for Youth Mission Trips
- Spring Training...Tips for Building Better
Players and Stronger Teams
led by Gary Permenter

Special Guest:
Wesley Brainard

For more information, please contact the Mississippi
Baptist Convention Board
Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

FEBRUARY 12, 2002
9 A.M. - NOON

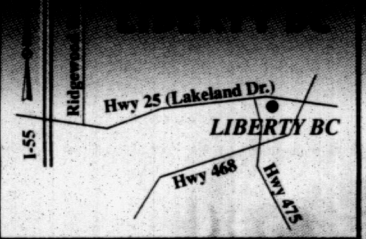
LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH
5199 LAKELAND DRIVE,
FLOWOOD

Becky Martin from LifeWay will be here to lead our expedition deep into the rain forest as we travel along

FOR ALL PASTORS, VBS DIRECTORS, VBS LEADERS TO EXPLORE THE 2002 THEME, AMAZON OUTFITTERS, ON EXPEDITION WITH THE ONE TRUE GOD.

VBS JUMPSTART Outfitter

curriculum will be on display and available for purchase from Jackson's LifeWay Christian Store.



BAPTIST HYMNALS NEEDED FOR AFRICAN SEMINARY

The only seminary in Africa offering a graduate degree in church music is in Ogbomosho, Nigeria. Currently, most African church choirs sing only the melody of hymns from memory, for they have only the words without music.

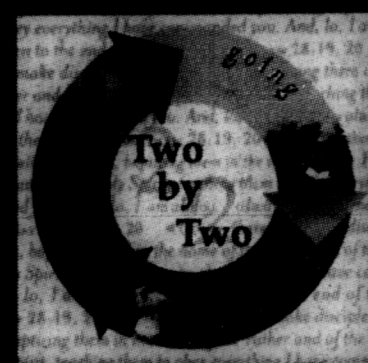
Jimmy McCaleb, Church Music Department consultant, after teaching a course at this seminary, has a burden to provide our fellow Baptist musicians in Africa with 5,000 copies of the 1991 Baptist Hymnal. Their choirs could then proclaim the theology of our Baptist faith in beautiful four-part harmony! **As of August, 3,000 hymnals have been given and sent.**

You can help with a financial gift. One hymnal is \$5. A box of 20 is \$100. If you or your church group would like to participate in this ministry, please call Jimmy McCaleb at 601-292-3273, 1-800-748-1651 or E-mail him at jmccaleb@mbcb.org.

Checks may be made out to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and mailed to:

Jimmy McCaleb
MBCB
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205

THE BAPTIST HYMNAL



MISSISSIPPI STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE

JANUARY 21-22, 2002
COLONIAL HEIGHTS
BAPTIST CHURCH, JACKSON

Schedule

Monday, January 21

Afternoon Session, 1:30 p.m.

MusicR.L. and Beth Sigrest
Messages ..Junior Hill, Fred Lowery, Nelson Price



Junior Hill
Hartselle, Ala.

Evening Session, 6:30 p.m.

Music.....Larry Kulke and Colonial Heights choir
Messages.....Len Turner, Junior Hill



Nelson Price,
Kennesaw, Ga.

Tuesday, January 22

Vocational Evangelists Session, 9 a.m.

MusicMona Faith, Steve Walker
Ronnie Cottingham, Gerald and Cindy Simmons
Jimmy Knight, Myrna Hedgepeth
Messages ..Billy Smith, Tim Posey, Charles Smith



Mac Brunson
Dallas

Lunch Break, 11:30 a.m.

Afternoon Session, 1:30 p.m.

MusicR.L. and Beth Sigrest
MessagesMac Brunson, Len Turner
Nelson Price



Fred Lowery
Bossier City, La.

Evening Session, 6:30-9 p.m.

MusicMississippi Singing Churchmen
Messages.....Fred Lowery, Mac Brunson



Len Turner
Woodstock, Ga.

"Going, therefore, make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And, lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- Matthew 28:19, 20



R.L. and Beth
Sigrest
Yazoo City

For more info contact the MBC Evangelism Dept.
at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3273



Deacon Ministry Emphasis 2002

Deacon Ministry Emphasis . . . is a plan with specific actions that highlight deacon ministries and involves deacon training and service.

The Purpose Of Deacon Emphasis Is To:

- Focus on their biblical role ● Build team relationships
- Secure involvement in ministries ● Develop skills for ministry

Deacon Emphasis Week is scheduled for *January 13-20, 2002*, but a deacon ministry emphasis may be conducted at any time during the year.

To participate, the deacons would choose at least two actions and perform them during a specified time (preferably during *Deacon Emphasis Week*). See the possible activities listed in this brochure.

A certificate of recognition will be presented to each deacon body that participates.

Suggested Activities . . .

- Conduct a deacon's retreat or training event
- Enter the Deacon Family Ministry Plan
- Conduct Pastor/Staff Appreciation Day
 - Sponsor a special ministry project
- Conduct prayer/planning retreat with church leaders
 - Sponsor a mission trip or tour
- Enter Deacon/Pastor Covenant to work together as partners in ministry
 - Plan and conduct worship service
- Subscribe to "The Deacon" or "Growing Churches" magazine for all deacons
 - Promote and pray for revival
- Conduct activities to strengthen church fellowship
 - View and study video tapes
- Conduct efforts to reclaim inactive church members
 - Develop committee leadership
- Conduct an in-house survey of the local church needs and resources
 - Conduct a demographics study
- Conduct deacon-led witnessing/visitation/prospect-find activities
 - Study deacon resource materials
- Assist staff in Discovering Spiritual Gifts study
- Train worship decision counselors

For more info, contact the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Dept.
at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3305.

Regional Women Reaching Women Training



Saturday, January 26, 2002
8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
FBC, Clinton

For church and/or associational leaders
(Present or Potential)

- \$20 per person registration fee
(includes training materials, snacks and lunch)

For registration information contact Sharon Brewer at sbrewer@rankinbaptist.org. For questions call 292-3324 in Jackson, or 1-800-748-1651 and ask for Kathy Burns, or e-mail Kburns@mbcb.org. If you need lodging at Patterson Place, contact Alicia at adungan@mbcb.org.

Hosted by Rankin Baptist Association Women's Ministry, Mississippi Baptist Women's Visionary Team, and LifeWay.



First Contact/ Homebound Tour



January 21, 2002
Temple Baptist Church (West)
5220 Old Hwy. 11, Hattiesburg

January 22, 2002
First Baptist Church
1560 Popps Ferry, Biloxi

9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

FIRST CONTACT

ministry is designed to provide an ongoing emphasis for outreach and ministry through the Preschool Sunday School division by:

- helping your church discover, locate, and minister to young adult prospects
- discovering expectant parents and families with babies up to 12 months of age
- making contacts (visits, telephone, and write) on a regular basis.

Contact Linda Reeves
Sunday School Department
292-3294 in Jackson
1-800-748-1651, Ext. 294

HOMEBOUND

ministry is a bridge between the Sunday School, your church, and people who cannot come to the church facilities.

- Who are homebound adults?
- How do I organize a homebound ministry?
- Where do I find homebound adults?
- How do I make a homebound visit?
- What resources are available for Homebound Ministry?
- What about ministry?

Contact Mark Lott
Sunday School Department
292-3295 in Jackson
1-800-748-1651, Ext. 295

Pray this day for...

December 21, 2001 - January 10, 2002

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

PRAYER - A LIFE-LONG WALK WITH GOD - "Learn to pray with persistence. with increasing hope. with Scripture and to pray toward God's purpose instead of praying about your problems."

Adapted from 'FOLLOW ME' by Randy Sprinkle

As aid is rendered to Afghan refugees in Pakistan, pray that God would open doors for Christian workers and national Christians to play a major role. As the world offers physical relief, pray that Afghans and Pakistanis will find the spiritual relief of salvation.

Larry Hunt is director of collegiate ministry at Florida A&M University in Tallahassee. Pray for this new ministry's direction and approaches. Pray for Larry's health. He is a cancer survivor. Pray for his wife, Dorothy.

Pray that the Lord would continue to use radio broadcasts in the heart language of the Isaan in Thailand to reach the hearts of the Isaan for Him.

Will Fields and his wife, Carolyn, helped launch the Pennsylvania Racing Outreach this year at Pocono International Raceway in Pa. Pray that the ministry will grow and volunteers will come forward to help. Pray for needed funds to present quality programs.

Pray for the 115 children and youth who made decisions for Christ at the Baptist Camp in Venezuela, during summer camping season. Pray for openness and responsiveness among the parents as they are contacted about the possibility of Bible study in their homes.

A Christian leader in South Asia has recently broken tradition by marrying a non-believer in secret. Pray for honesty with their families, and that the families will accept the marriage. Pray for continued growth in his faith, and that the bride and her family will become believers.

Christmas Day - Many young people in China flock to the registered church buildings on Christmas and Easter. Pray for them to become powerful disciples of Christ. (2) Pray for Prime Minister Rinchinhyamin Amajargal of Mongolia (north of China).

L., who is a member of the Telugu people group in India, does not have a good relationship with her mother-in-law. Many young wives find abuse, not love, in their new homes. Pray that these women and their families would find hope and peace in Jesus Christ.

A cooking demonstration was held in October with some ladies among the Ancash Quechua of Peru. During part of it, they learned new praise songs and had a sharing time. Pray that the ladies will gather from time to time and that they will develop friendships.

Pray for the missionary families serving in central and northern Argentina. They write: "We know our spiritual life is the key to effectiveness for the Lord. The struggle to stay close to Him is just as important here. It is also just as easy to replace being godly with being busy."

A sprawling apartment complex is located in the heart of Lima, Peru, where residents live, shop and socialize without ever leaving the complex. Pray for the Lima Apartment Ministries Project Team as they begin ministering inside this self-contained community.

Nancy Dill in Germany recently began three English classes, with many non-Christians participating. Since Nancy will be leaving for a one year furlough next May, she wants to use this school year to deepen these friendships and share her faith. Pray to this end.

For: (1) Youth Evangelism Conference, Mississippi College, 1:30 p.m., 27th-4 p.m., 28th (Evan); (2) Pray that the Lord will call someone to serve as a church-planter apprentice for the Mossi in the northern area of Burkina Faso. Pray for the Mossi people in that area.

After the crash of the American Airlines plane on Nov. 15, two missionaries went to the Dominican Republic airport (the flight's destination) to offer assistance to family members of the victims. Pray that these family members will be saved as a result of this tragedy.

Malawi is troubled with malnutrition and starvation. Last year's rains came too long and too hard, producing floods and ruining crops. Please pray that the people will realize that their traditional religious activities cannot help them, and that they will seek God in this crisis.

A worker has recently become friends with a house-church leader in eastern Mongolia. The leader desires to see a church-planting movement happen in the area and he wants the worker to help him do that. Pray for them as they seek to lead others to become more evangelistic.

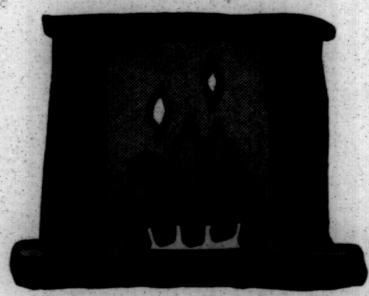
A missionary, who serves as a sports evangelism consultant in Taiwan, asks prayer for the student athletes, coaches and teachers as a new college semester begins. Pray for final decisions to follow Christ and for boldness to share their faith with other students.

Another 500,000 Afghan refugees are expected in Iran and a million more in Pakistan. As the Father remains poised and ready to bring true peace, let us pray that He will use these events to make His name and purposes known to all who have never heard the gospel.

Pray for D. in Chengdu, China. D. is a young man who is being used mightily for the kingdom, as he grows in his faith. He seems to be a leader among his peers and is being used to share the gospel. Pray for his protection as you pray for his boldness.

Three women prayed to receive Christ but due to strict confinement, they have no fellowship with other believers. Two have New Testaments, so pray that they would grow in the grace and the knowledge of Jesus. Pray also that their husbands would become believers.

Missionary Robert Smith in Japan meets weekly with three seekers who say they believe in God and in Jesus, but they are still reluctant to make a commitment to become Christians. Pray that God will give Robert wisdom to know what to do next.



Mississippi Baptist Chaplains' Association Winter Retreat

January 25-26, 2002

Gray Conference Center - 1530 Way Road
(about 10 miles north of Canton, turn off of Hwy 51)

"Known Only to God: Affirming the Sacred Deed"

Led by Kenneth R. Gilburth
of Pathways Counseling Group, Jackson

Come join us in a beautiful, peaceful setting, away from the stress. Take a walk in the fresh air and sit by the fire.

There is no cost for chaplains and spouses who are members of the association.

To register for the Winter Retreat or to get more information, please return the registration form, or call Elaine Smith at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3361.

3-84

MR. DAVID COLLINS

Parents: Charles & Suzanne

4-85

MR. DAVID JOHNSTON

Parents: Vincent & Sharon

7-85

MR. ADRIAN MARTIN

Parents: Asbury & Hope

8-97

MISS MARIANNA MOSS

Parents: Clay & Vicky

16-01

MR. HADDON BLEDSOE

Parents: David & Laurie

24-94

MISS ABIGAIL L. PACKARD

Parents: Michael & Sabrina

24-00

MR. NATHANIEL PEACOCK

Parents: Kevin & Brenda

Please take a moment to drop a birthday greeting and word of encouragement to our Missionary Kids! For security, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to:

Child's name and parent's name
International Mission Board
P.O. Box 6767
Richmond, VA 23230-8767



Take a moment to send
a card to encourage
the children of
our missionaries!

HOUSE TOPS

NAMES IN THE NEWS

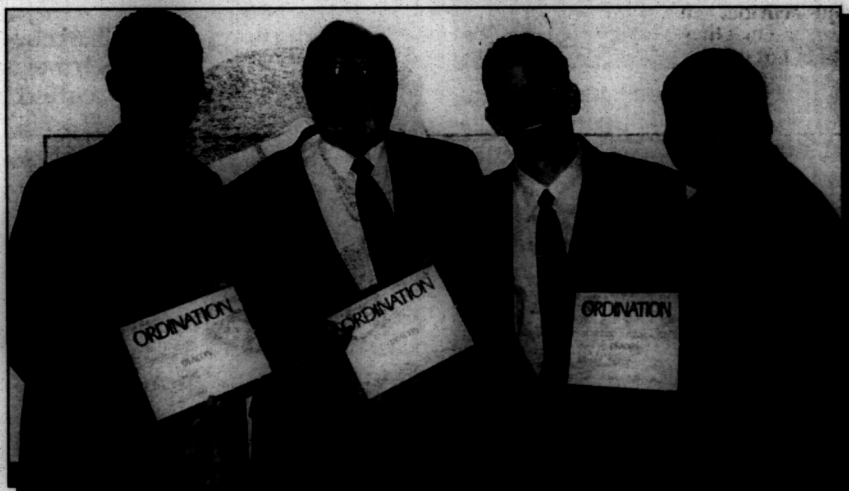


Members of Liberty Church, Liberty, receiving perfect attendance awards in Sunday School were Garry Austin, 15 years; Cassie Rogers, five years; Larry Dixon, three years; and Jewell Lee Whittington, seven years. Pictured (from left) are Martin Hayden, pastor; Austin; Rogers; Dixon; and Whittington.

Cary Worthington (pictured, left) was honored on his 10th anniversary as pastor of West Laurel Church, Jones Association. The church hosted a special service and held a dinner in honor of him and his wife Carol. Worthington was presented a check and certificate by Wendel Turner (right) chairman of deacons.



Worthington and Turner



New Zion Church, Braxton, held a deacon ordination service for Kevin Davis, Jim Hudson, and Brent Shorter. Pictured (from left) are Davis; Hudson; Shane Waldrop, pastor; and Shorter.



Turbyfill, Palmer, Kimbrell, and Gross

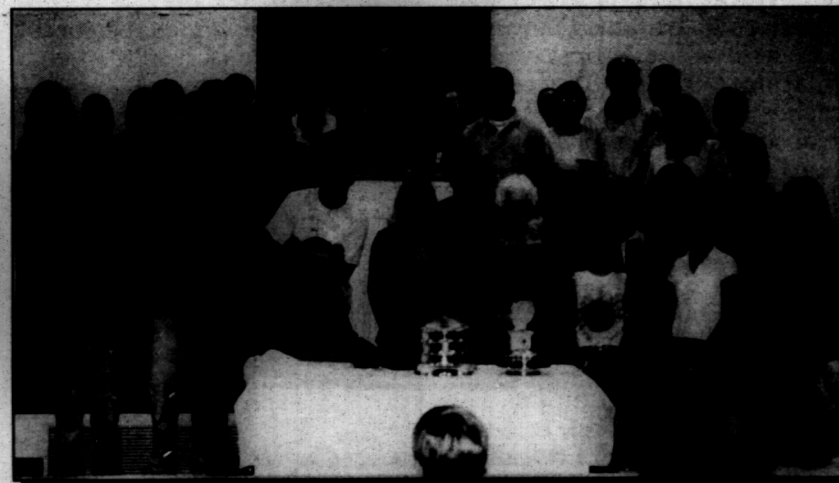
Macedonia Church, Suqualena, honored Annette Palmer and Sherry Turbyfill with the 2001-2002 National Sunday School Teacher of the Year Award. This Sunday School award is given by Gospel Light in honor of Henrietta Mears. Palmer and Turbyfill received a certificate of appreciation and a gift. Palmer is the adult (ages 40-65) Sunday School teacher. Turbyfill teaches the young adults (18-29). Pictured (from left) are Turbyfill; Palmer; Jo Ann Kimbrell, Sunday School director; and Jason Gross, pastor.



Hadley and Lee

Frank Lee (pictured, right) received an appreciation plaque on Sept. 16 from Andy Hadley, minister of music,

First Church, Wiggins, for 50 years of membership in the sanctuary choir.



County Line Church, Union, honored Jean Hamil for 45 years of service as youth Sunday School teacher the evening of Sept. 2. Barron Pilgrim, pastor, shared several anecdotes of times spent in service with her. Hamil's Sunday School class presented her with a corsage and a music box. A reception in her honor followed the evening service. Pictured with Hamil are several generations of youth she taught.

North Korea added to list of violators

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. State Department has added North Korea to its annual list of the world's most flagrant violators of religious liberty.

The addition of the communist country marks the first time a regime has been added to the "countries of particular concern" (CPCs) since the original list was compiled in 1999.

The State Department kept six regimes on its CPC list: Burma, China, Iran, Iraq, Sudan and the Taliban of Afghanistan. The Milosevic regime in Serbia was on the first two CPC lists but is no longer in power.

CFI — PEWS, NEW & used. Baptistries, steeples, & stained glass, MS & AL. (800) 830-0583.

THE MISSISSIPPI TABLECLOTH and other stories — \$7 — great gift! Order from Guy Henderson, 202 McDonald Drive, Clinton, MS 39056.

FBC GREENEVILLE, TENN., is seeking a full-time preschool and children's ministries director to oversee the ministry of our children and reach young families. Send resumes to First Baptist Church, 211 N. Main Street, Greenville, TN 37743, ATTN: Tad Everett.

ATTENTION MINISTERS and self employed. Finally affordable health insurance call (662) 568-3482. Underwritten by the Mega Life & Health Ins. Group.

HOPPER GLASS STUDIO — custom church windows, reworking and repair — Columbus/Jackson (877) 477-1899.

PEARL RIVER GLASS STUDIO, INC., (800) 771-3639; www.prgs.com. New stained glass church windows, repair and restoration, baptistery murals.

CHURCH PEW UPHOLSTERY Free estimates. Davis Upholstery, Quitman, Miss., phone (601) 776-6617.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH is seeking full-time pastor with seminary degree and some experience. Send resumes to First Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, 1710 McArthur Drive, Mansfield, LA 71052.

CUSTOM STAINED GLASS windows for churches and homes. Stained Glassworks, Inc. (800) 605-2970.

SUPER GRACE BEACH HOUSE for rent. Excellent for staff retreats or family vacations. Located in a private subdivision at Fort Morgan, Ala. Visit our website at <http://supergracebeachhouse.com> or call Allan or Linda Rankin at (888) 784-4025.

KEMPER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is seeking a part-time associational missions director (AMD). Send resume to Gwen at P.O. Box 36, DeKalb, MS 39328. Job description and salary package furnished upon request. (601) 743-4524.

CHURCH AVERAGING 100 in Sunday School seeks full-time associate pastor/minister of music and youth. Please send resume to Calvary Baptist Church, 2878 Old Hwy. 27, Vicksburg, MS 39180; or fax to (601) 636-7574.

DANIEL MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH, Jackson, Miss., is seeking a part-time financial secretary. For further information, please call the church office at (601) 376-4100.

BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR NEEDED for church located in the beautiful Desoto National Forest. We usually have around 50 attend Sunday School and a good turnout for Wednesday night Bible Study. The parsonage is being renovated. We are located 45 minutes from Hattiesburg and about one hour from the Gulf Coast. Contact us at janicebaptistchurch@hotmail.com or 528 Snider Rd., Brooklyn, MS 39425.

ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH, BRANDON, is seeking a minister of music. The church is located on Highway 43 South between Pelahatchie and Puckett. Please submit resume to: Antioch Baptist Church, 2350 Highway 43 South, Brandon, MS 39042.

Are your seniors tired of crawling over the HUMP? The solution is a 15-passenger van with an aisle, raised roof & electric step. Call Tri-State Van & Bus Today! 1-800-330-3822 BUSES! VANS! PEOPLE MOVERS! www.tri-statevanbus.com

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Ethridge, Carpenter, Sessums, and the Theads

Jarrett Jamieson was ordained to the ministry by Slayden Church, Slayden, his home church, on Oct. 21. He is serving as minister of student/associate pastor at Clarksdale Church, Clarksdale. Pictured (from left) are Edd Lawrence, pastor of Clarksdale Church; Jamieson; and Thomas Jamieson, pastor of Mt. Pleasant Church, Cheyenne, Texas. Gary Adams is pastor of Slayden Church.

Herbert P. Williams, music minister at New Fellowship Church, Hickory, was recog-

nized on Nov. 18 for his 85th birthday. Williams, a charter member, has held many church offices over the years, including chairman of the deacons, treasurer, Sunday School director, and teacher. He is pictured with his wife Jeanette. Chris Cochran is pastor.



The Williams

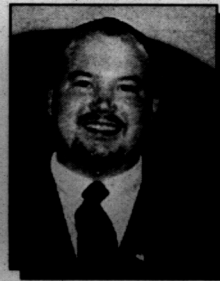
STAFF CHANGES

Arkadelphia Church, Bailey, on Nov. 18 honored deacons who have served more than 20 years. The widows of three of the deacons received the award for their husbands. Pictured (from left) are Elouise Ethridge, Mary Nell Carpenter, and Irene Sessums; and Edwin and Robbie Thead. John R. Koch is pastor.



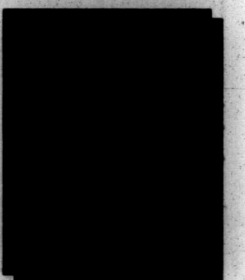
Lawrence, J. Jamieson, and T. Jamieson

William Wall, a native of Greensburg, La., called as pastor of Bluff Springs Church, Magnolia, has been serving the church since May. He previously served as pastor of Greenlaw Church, Kentwood, La. Wall is a graduate of William Carey College, Hattiesburg, and New Orleans Seminary.



Wall

Meadowview Church, Starkville, has called **Ronnie Hatfield** as pastor effective Dec. 16. A native of Booneville, he is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and New Orleans Seminary and is working on a doctor of ministry degree at the Bible Theological Seminary, Newburg, Ind. His previous place of service was Ecu Church, Ecu.



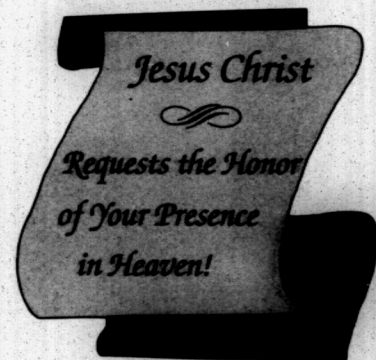
Hatfield

Crenshaw Church, Crenshaw, has called **Clint Harris** as pastor effective Oct. 7. He is a native of Tate County. Harris is a student at Mid America Seminary.



Harris

Walker Hill Church, Brandon, has called **Ronald Purser** as pastor, effective Nov. 4. He is a graduate of Covington Seminary in Georgia. His previous place of service was Calhoun Church, Hot Coffee.



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. *(I have sinned.)*
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. *(I repent.)*
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Mississippi College Office of Continuing Education will be offering Instant Piano for Hopelessly Busy People on Jan. 28, from 6-9 p.m. The course teaches chords, not notes. It is an absolutely beginning class in chord piano techniques. David Haynes of Georgia will lead the seminar. The registration fee is \$49. An additional materials fee of \$20 for a spiral-bound workbook and 60-minute practice cassette, will be collected in class by the instructor. Pre-registration is required by Jan. 23. For more information, call the Office of Continuing Education at (601) 925-3265 or e-mail at continuing-ed@mc.edu.

The Board of Ministerial Education of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board awarded the newly established Hardy R. Denham, Jr. Scholarship to William Carey College (WCC) student Benji Sessums of Lena. The scholarship honors Denham's contribution to ministerial education in Mississippi through his work on this board and at WCC. Denham served as director of church and denominational relations until

his retirement in 1998. Sessums is a senior religion major at WCC and serves as pastor of Cedar Grove Church, Lena.

Pictured (from left) are Sessums; Daniel Caldwell, dean of biblical studies at WCC; and JoAnna and Hardy Denham.



Sessums, Caldwell, and the Denhams

Pews, pulpits, baptistries, stained glass, carpet, and steeples.
Van Winkle Church Furnishings & Pew Upholstery
Toll Free
1-800-821-7263

LifeWay CHURCH BUSES
Carpenter Bus Sales, Inc.
Since 1953

Church Buses ♦ Vans ♦ New & Used



Available in 20' to 40' models
(15 to 46 passengers, New & Used)

We buy used buses
LifeWay Discount

(800) 370-6180

www.carpenterbus.com

"Nation's #1 church bus dealer"

GREAT NATION INVESTMENT CORP.
invites your indication of interest to:
FIRST MORTGAGE CHURCH BONDS
EARN UP TO: **9.25%**

These bonds may be placed in a self-directed IRA. Transfers and rollovers accepted, in most cases.

Interest Payable Quarterly
This announcement is neither an offer to sell nor a solicitation of an offer to buy. All offers are made by prospectus only.

GREAT NATION INVESTMENT CORP.

5408-A Bell • Amarillo TX 79109
Member NASD, SIPC

For more complete information about bond issues, obtain a prospectus which describes all of the particulars of the undertaking. Read it carefully before you invest or send money. All bonds are offered at face value, subject to availability.

CALL OR WRITE TO:

Christy Overby 1-800-288-4183
341 Dover Lane Local:
Madison, MS (601) 856-9158
39110

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

The love of Christmas

John 3:16; 1 John 3:11-24

By J. Michael Barnett

A seminary professor once said, "Words don't have meaning, they have usage." I have found the professor's statement to be somewhat true, especially when it comes to morality.

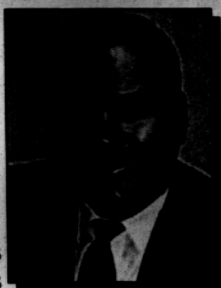
In order to hasten the tolerance and acceptance of immoral behavior, the secularist and politically correct gurus of our nation have redefined words and applied them to lifestyles that are sinful and ungodly.

One such word is love. The definition of love, in secular language, can mean anything from covetousness for material gain to sexual lust. In movies and television love is viewed as selfish, whimsical, and without commitment.

The professor's statement about words may be true in terms of secular communication, but God says what he means and means what he says in the Bible.

The Bible says, "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16). The Greek word for love is *agape* in both the noun and verb form and is used to describe the relationship that God has toward Jesus (John 17:26). It is the same love with which God loves us. *Agape* means that God loves us the same way he loves Jesus, his son. The Bible also teaches that this love is "shed abroad" in the believer's heart toward others (Rom 5:5).

The *agape* of God is exemplified in his giving of Jesus



Barnett

(John 3:16). God's love for the world is selfless and sacrificial. What love is greater than this? That God would give his own son Jesus so that our sins are covered and he considers us just as he considers his only begotten son.

The love of God manifested in the believer is evidence of salvation. Because of the new birth, we should love one another (1 John 3:11). In the previous verse John links together righteousness and love.

In verse 12 he gives the example of Cain. Cain approached God on the basis of his own self-righteousness, he did not bring a blood sacrifice, therefore his offering was unacceptable. Abel on the other hand approached God by obedient faith (Hebrews 11:4), and was declared righteous by God. No love was manifest in Cain; there was no evidence of salvation.

Love is not only external evidence, but it is also personal evidence of salvation. 1 John 3:14-15 asserts, "we know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." *Agape* love, placed in us by the Holy Spirit, extending toward our brothers and sisters in Christ as a lifestyle, is evidence of our conversion.

The love of God through the believer is observable by practical expression. The practical expression of Jesus in laying down his life for us is our motivation to lay down our lives for the brethren (1 John 3:16). The expression of love is death to self. While dying to self does include physical death, it also includes acts of selflessness and compassion extended toward others.

1 John 3:17 speaks of the selfless love of giving. When a brother has a need and God has provided us with the resources to help, love is moved with compassion and gives to the brother in need. *Agape* is more

than just a word; it is an action. It is expressed by deed and truth (1 John 3:18). It assures us of our own salvation by confirming in our hearts the truth of God (1 John 3:19).

The remaining verses of 1 John 3 tell us that God commands us to love one another. Verses 12-20 are speaking of the character of Christ loving others through us. Verses 21-24 speak of the command of Christ for us. He does not command us to love the brethren without putting a love in our hearts for them. It is an act of grace.

A definitive statement of what it means to love God qualifies the promise of verse 22. Love of God is always shown by obedience. Jesus said, "If you love me keep my commandments" (John 14:15). In the context of 1 John 3, to obey is to love others. It is an obedient life that lends itself to effective praying in accordance with the Word and will of God.

Barnett is pastor of First Church, Ocean Springs.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Celebrate Christmas

Luke 2:1-20

By Carleen McGraw

Christians all over the world are familiar with the portion of Scripture in Luke 2 that details the birth of Jesus. God himself had chosen Mary and Joseph, who were engaged to be married, as the earthly parents of his son. He sent Gabriel, his special angel, first to Mary.

Gabriel informed Mary that she would "be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. 'How will this be,' Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a virgin?'"

"The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God'" (Lk. 1:30, 34, 35).

An angel of the Lord

appeared to Joseph and told him that what he had been told was true, "what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:20-21). Then Joseph "took Mary home as his wife."

It is always amazing how God can use all sorts of people, places, and things to accomplish his goals. He used Mary, a teenaged girl who knew and understood the Scriptures, and Joseph, "a just man" nothing really outstanding about either except the fact that they were God's choice.

Micah the prophet had predicted many years earlier concerning Bethlehem, "out of you



McGraw

will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times" (Micah 5:2). Joseph and Mary, being of the house of David, were required to register in Bethlehem, a three-days journey from their home in Nazareth.

As Mary and Joseph neared Bethlehem, the birth of the Child was impending, but on their arrival, they found there was no room for them in the inn, so Jesus the Son of God was born in a stable in Bethlehem, and Mary "wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger" (2:7), a feeding trough for the animals.

God used angels to spread the latest news. Shepherds tending their sheep in the fields nearby were terrified when an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to them with a message, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior

has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger" (2:10-12).

A great company of angels suddenly joined the angel "praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests'" (2:13-14).

The shepherds went into town and found the baby just as the angels had told them, and they immediately began to spread the news of what they had been told "concerning this Child."

People who heard what the shepherds told them "marveled at those things." When the baby was eight days old, "He was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived" (2:21). "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (5:25).

Prophets, Gabriel, a Jewish couple, a Roman emperor, shepherds in the fields, a multitude of angels, shared in the

story of Jesus' birth. Christians today know all about his birth, his life, his death, and his resurrection in fulfillment of the Scriptures. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (Jn. 11:25).

Is everyone on your Christmas list a Christian? Are those around you celebrating the birthday of the King, or are they just celebrating Christmas? Do the children, grandchildren, cousins, and others around you perhaps those with whom you work know Jesus as Lord, or as a baby in a manger?

Material gifts are fine and greatly appreciated for awhile, but the gift of Jesus Christ as Savior lasts forever! Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (Jn. 10:10). This Christmas share the gift of eternal life in him the baby in the manger in Bethlehem.

McGraw is a member of First Church, Louisville.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

News items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST
Record

no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

The Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission (MBHC) has noted that 53 Mississippi Baptist churches and one association celebrated significant anniversaries in 2001. Edward McMillan of Clinton, executive secretary of the commission,

noted that the 2001 anniversaries cumulatively represent 2,400 years of service to the Kingdom cause. The churches celebrating significant anniversaries this year and their associations include:

175 YEARS

Mt. Nebo/Jasper
First, Magnolia/Pike

150 YEARS

Bear Creek/Attala
Doty Springs/Attala
Antioch/Clarke
Hebron/Golden Triangle
Pleasant Ridge/Holmes
Spring Hill*/Marshall
Good Hope/Metro

Liberty Hill/Panola

Mt. Olive/Prentiss
First, Mendenhall/Simpson

125 YEARS

Oak Grove/Lauderdale
Scotland/Montgomery
Bethel/Monroe
Mt. Zion/New Choctaw
First, McComb/Pike
Stonewall/Simpson

100 YEARS

Lauderdale Association
Second, Kosciusko/Attala
Self Creek/Golden Triangle
First, Soso/Jones
Brewer/Lee
Calvary, Jackson/Metro
Lula/Metro
Skene/Mid Delta
Berwick/Mississippi
Seminary/Perry
East McComb/Pike

Liberty/Pontotoc

Randolph/Pontotoc
First, Richland/Rankin
D'Lo/Simpson
First, Taylorsville/Smith

For information on how to organize a church anniversary celebration, contact MBHC at P.O. Box 4024, Mississippi College, Clinton, MS 39058. Telephone: (601) 925-3435. E-mail: mbhc@mc.edu.

*159 YEARS

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS • DECEMBER 30, 2001

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

The challenge of Christmas

Philippians 3:1-14

By J. Michael Barnett

Is Jesus the priority of your life? The secular worldview contends that self must be one's priority. However, the believer's worldview is dictated by Scripture, which teaches that Christ must have continuing priority in our lives.

Paul discusses how to prioritize Christ in your life in Philippians 3:1-14. He teaches that giving Christ first place in your life is not necessarily a step-by-step procedure. It is a lifestyle that starts off with grace, secures godliness, and strives for the goal of Christ likeness.

To the Jewish mind, Paul was an outstanding and godly person. He was in Jewish thought like the good, clean, moral, church member (v. 1-7).

Paul came to the truth on the road to Damascus and recognized that to achieve godliness grace had to be his starting block. Perhaps many church members today do not give Christ priority in their lives because they have not started off with grace.

Starting off with grace rejects the pride of ancestry (v. 5). Paul learned that being a devout Jew from the tribe of Benjamin did not make him godly. I was attending Southern Baptist churches nine months before I was born, but my ancestry does not make me desire to put Christ first. Nor does orthodoxy (v. 5).

Paul was a Pharisee; he learned from grace that the orthodoxy of the Pharisees did not make him godly. Correct

doctrine is of the utmost importance, but it means nothing without the work of grace in your heart.

Paul also learned that activity does not make one godly (v. 6). Before his conversion he actively was seeking to destroy the church. To the Jew this was impressive. Paul learned that zealous activity is not congruent to righteousness.

Many church members fill their lives with busyness, doing the work of the church. While their work is appreciated it can never replace the imputed righteousness of Christ that comes by grace. Paul's testimony also excludes morality as the means of salvation (v. 6).

Could it be that many church members are motivated by ancestry, orthodoxy, activity, and morality rather than a work of grace performed by God in their lives? Perhaps this is why Christ is not given priority in their lives. It is grace that motivates

each of us to give Christ preeminence in our lives.

The lifestyle that gives Jesus priority secures godliness by knowing Jesus (v. 8-11). In verse 8 Paul uses an accounting term to express how he seeks to know Christ. All the past that he once counted as righteousness he puts in the loss column. He only counts his relationship with Christ as a gain. Putting Christ first in your life means that you seek to gain knowledge of him. This is experiential and intimate knowledge.

The passionate believer who gives Christ priority in his life desires to know the person of Christ (v. 8-9). He or she desires to "win Christ."

When Christ is won by faith the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer. This positional righteousness produces a practical righteousness.

Putting Christ first also means that the believer seeks to know the power of Christ's resurrection (v. 10). That is the overcoming life; the life that overcomes spiritual deadness and sin.

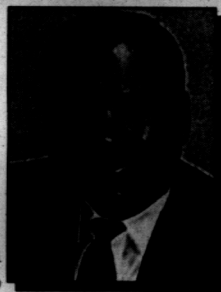
Also, when Christ is the priority the believer submits to partnership with Christ in suffering (v. 10). The fellowship of suffering in Christ conforms us to his image. This is paramount when Christ is our priority.

This preeminent pursuit leads to a humble hope in the promise of Jesus (v. 11). Here Paul does not doubt his stand in the coming resurrection, but is acknowledging that he cannot attain it without grace.

The single ambition when Christ is first is to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (v. 12-14). The spirit-filled Christian knows that he has not "attained" perfection.

While he is cognizant of the work Christ has done in his life, he is also sensitive to the ongoing need for conformity to the image of Christ (see Romans 8:28-30). Therefore, he "presses on" in his drive to pursue what God desires him to be.

Barnett is pastor of First Church, Ocean Springs.



Barnett

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Love God

Deuteronomy 6:1-25

By Carleen McGraw

It has been said that the main message of Deuteronomy could be summarized in one word: Remember! As Moses comes to the end of his life and leadership of God's people, his greatest desire is that they will remember how the Lord has brought that generation to where they were.

God did not waste their time of wandering. For forty years the people had experienced first hand the faithfulness of God and witnessed untold miracles as he took care of them.

It was during these years that God had given them the laws and decrees that, if honored and obeyed, would make them different from the nations around them. If they kept the laws and decrees God had

given them, they, their children, and grandchildren were promised a long and prosperous life in the land. After years of wandering in the desert, such a promise must surely have made them anxious to cross over into that land.

Moses had many things to say to the people, and speaking to all Israel, he said, "hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (6:4-5).

The Egyptians had many gods, and the people in the land to which they were going would also have many gods. Moses knew the danger if God's people became involved with these other gods.

Because the Lord their God is one God, loyalty to him and obedience to his laws and decrees would be the expression of their love for him. They must teach his laws and decrees to their children by talking about them at all times. They were to bring them into conversations during the day, at bedtime, and when they got up in the morning.

They were to "tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates" (v.8). Wherever they looked, God's laws were displayed before their eyes and etched on their minds. Repetition was a good teacher and the same method works today as well.

These former slaves were about to enter "a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not

dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant then when you eat and are satisfied."

Remember! Remember how you came to this point! It was "the Lord who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery."

It is strange how success not failure is sometimes a great danger to God's people. Moses understood this, and he insists that they are to "be sure to keep the commands of the Lord your God... that it may go well with you, and you may go in and take over the good land the Lord promised on oath to your forefathers" (vv. 17-18).

Moses reminds them that one day, the children will want their parents to explain the meaning of all "the stipulations, decrees, and laws the Lord our God has commanded you," and they will have the opportunity to tell them how God, through his own miraculous powers and wonders, had brought them as slaves out of Egyptian bondage on a promise he had made to their forefa-

thers and how he had given them the laws and decrees by which they were to live "so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today" (v. 24).

The Israelite children need to know the reason the parents "are careful to obey all this law before the Lord our God, as he has commanded us" (v. 25). They need to know the success of their parents was totally dependent upon the grace of God, not on anything they had done.

God's grace still abounds. Centuries after Moses' experience with the Israelites, Paul explained to the Christians at Ephesus: "It is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God not by works, so that no one can boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

It was God's grace that brought the people to the Promised Land in Moses' day; it is God's grace that offers salvation to "whosoever believes in him" today!

McGraw is a member of First Church, Louisville.



McGraw

THE VILLAGE VIEW



Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director

P.O. Box 27
Clinton, MS 39060-0027
(601) 922-2242
e-mail: bcv1@misnet.com

Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

NOVEMBER 1-30, 2001 MEMORIALS

Cecil Klutts
Mr. Robert N. Walters
Mrs. Myrtle Sims Knight
Mr. W. N. Oliver Jr.
Miss Judy Kounovsky
Mrs. Anna W. Simmons
Mr. Wesley Kuykendall
Arlington Heights BC
Mrs. Mary Hilda Lane
New Hebron BC
Mr. Eric B. Langford
Mrs. Malcolm W. Heard
Mr. J. T. Lavender
Mrs. Malcolm W. Heard
Mr. Milton Lawrence
Mr. & Mrs. E. Wayne Smith
Ann Lee
The Benjamin Slater Family
Coyce Lee
The Benjamin Slater Family
Mrs. Mafalda Lott Lee
Ms. Fern M. Lyter
Ann Lott Denton

Wayne Denton
Mary Lou Lott
Mrs. Nell Lee
Mr. & Mrs. Larry W. Lee
Rev. Marvin Lee
Calhoun County Baptist Assoc
Mrs. Frances Lewis
Yale Street Baptist Church
Eleanor Lightsey
Mr. & Mrs. Norman N. Fountain
Cecil Little
Mr. Max Juchheim
Mrs. Lydia Little
New Hebron BC
Lloyd Lofton
Concord Baptist Church
Mr. Wade Logan
Mr. Norman Weathersby Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Clarence Minyard
Nancy Lutrick
Mr. & Mrs. B. Q. Davis
Charlie Massey
Ms. Billie C. McCully
Mrs. Helen Mathison
Mr. & Mrs. Cecil Glen Polk & Family
Mr. & Mrs. John A. Polk
Mrs. Reuel May
Dr. & Mrs. T. Scott McCay

Tommy McCoy
Lady Learner's SSC, FBC-McLain
Gerald Howard "Jay" McDaniel
Mrs. Sidney "June" McGraw
The M. D. Wallace Family
Chip & Jo Gallant
Dr. & Mrs. James E. Hand
Mrs. Billie Nell Jensen
Dr. & Mrs. A. N. Nichols III
Mr. & Mrs. John C. Templeton
Mr. & Mrs. Ben A. Tolbert Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald C. Welch
Mr. & Mrs. T. H. Talbert
Mrs. Mary McDonald
Ms. Jean Denson Evans
Todd McGonagill
Graeber Brothers, Inc.
Ethel B. McKinley
Mrs. Annette M. Fortenberry
Mr. Thomas "Tommy" W. Meeks
Mr. & Mrs. David P. Geil Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. T. J. Eure
Troy Miller
Ms. Mary C. Hannon
Mr. James Milstead
Mrs. Doris M. Archer
Mr. & Mrs. Pat Denton
Mrs. Helen Mitchell
Pheba Baptist Church
Charles Moak
Helen & David Jenkins
Buddy and Mitch Moore
Ms. Martha Moore
Mr. George A. Moore
Fidelis SSC, Highland BC-Vicksburg
Mr. & Mrs. George S. Cronia
Mary & Heavy Garrett
Mrs. Judy Moore
Ms. Carolyn C. Mason
Etta Mae Morgan
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Jenkins
Mrs. J. B. Lewis
Robert Lee Morgan
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Yeager Jr.
H. B. Moss, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Jack W. Tillotson
Bruce Murphree
Graeber Brothers Inc.
Mr. Scott William Murray
Dungan Engineering P A
Mr. C. L. Conerly Jr.
Gayle Murrell
Mr. & Mrs. Henry F. Peebles Jr.
Mr. Timothy Muse, Sr.
Bobbie M. Methvin
Mike & Suzanne Allen & Family
William S. Neel
Mr. & Mrs. Larry S. Benson
Marie Posey Nelson
Mrs. Janeiro L. Cranage
David Newman
Mr. & Mrs. Billy D. Newman
Elizabeth Bentley Newman
Mr. J. Robert Pope
Paul Nichols
Mr. & Mrs. Everett Wilson
Harris G. Oakes
Mr. Max Juchheim
Mrs. Mable P. Oden
Deidre Ford
Linda Grondin
Linda Saliba
Mrs. Glenna G. Brown
Kenneth Graves
Mr. Jeffrey Moon



The RA's from Star Church, Star, delivered Christmas gifts to be given to the residents of The Baptist Children's Village.

Roger Oliphant
Mr. & Mrs. Lendon E. Brown
Mr. & Mrs. Victor T. Fairburn
Mrs. Audrey Osborn
Ms. Ophelia Agent
Mrs. Liz Williams
Lula Ross Owen
Mrs. Bal Mobley
Mrs. Mary Adeline Pace
Susie Byrd & Clarence Minyard
Mr. & Mrs. William Manasco
Kay, Herb, Catherine & James Hyatt
Ms. Margaret Williams
Mr. Joel A. Parish
Arlington Heights BC
Lisa Parker
Brotherhood/Locomotive Engrs #450
Janice Patton
Vena Baldwin
Miss Pauline Peacock
Spring Hill BC
Josh Peebles
Mrs. Peggy M. Gillon
Eunice Breland Pennix
Mrs. Iris Hawkins
Mr. Samuel Peterson
Eddy & Angie McGinnis
Jerry Collins
Zeakie Petty
Hon. Cynthia D. Davis
Doyle Wayne Phegan
Mr. J. M. Osborne
Due Phillips
Ms. Mary Y. Womack
Bob Pittman, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Taylor Webb
Robert N. Polk
Sororis Club
Linda Posey
Mr. & Mrs. Billy R. Barnett
Eugene Prestage
Mr. & Mrs. David Boyd
Danny Young
Charles Pyron
Mr. & Mrs. J. T. Morrison
Mrs. Rosie Rainer
Albert & Walterene Bartlett
Mr. & Mrs. John J. Watson
Mrs. Ruth Rainey
Bethany SSC, FBC-Greenwood
Mrs. Onie Raley
Ms. Sarah E. Jones
Reid
Mrs. Jerry W. Carpenter
Mr. Duell Richardson
Mr. and Mrs. Theron Poole
Dr. & Mrs. Neil H. Simmons
Mr. & Mrs. John Mose Rider
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Mabry
Mrs. Kathryn Riley
Class of 1942 Bassfield School
Sedgie Robertson
Mr. & Mrs. Darrell Randall
Mr. Charles Rode
Mrs. Alyce R. Clark
Steve Rumpf
Mrs. Lucy Tucker
Janice Rutkowski
Mr. & Mrs. Elmer Blakely
Larry Sanders
Mr. & Mrs. David Etheridge
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Etheridge
Mr. & Mrs. Rusty Mitchell

Donna Shotts Schutzmann
Ms. Dot C. Curan & Family
Mrs. Esma Scruggs
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Scruggs
Judith Seifert
Rev. & Mrs. Harold G. Wilson
Lonnie Sellers
Mrs. Doris Farmer
Mrs. Frances Sheedy
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy H. Fulce
Sarah Elizabeth Shelton
Dr. and Mrs. William B. Thompson
Tina Polk Speights Silver
Helen & David Jenkins
Glen Allen Simmons
Mr. & Mrs. Donald M. Rawls
Rita Simmons
Ms. Mary J. Ervin
Mr. J. D. Simpson
Mr. Charles W. Holmes
Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Fuqua
Mrs. Myla Travis
Sawyer Sims
Dr. & Mrs. John M. Norsworthy
Mr. Spencer Smith, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Prentiss G. Cox
Alfred Smith
Concord Baptist Church
Mr. & Mrs. James Buie Jr.
Charles H. Smith
Challengers' SSC, Macedonia BC
Mrs. Alma C. Smith
Mr. Albert E. Carver
Mrs. Hattie Coleman Smith
The W. R. Martin Family
Mrs. I. W. Nabers

Mrs. Myrtis Sanders Smith
Mr. & Mrs. C. G. Summertime
Cryder
Mrs. Myrtle Goolsby
Mr. W. L. "Red" Solomon, Jr.
Mr. Richard C. Bryan Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O. Crosthwait Jr.
Margaret Sorrells
Deacons of Macedonia BC-Brookhaven
Rene' Britt's SSC-Macedonia BC
Van Seales' SSC-Macedonia BC
Mr. T. J. Stanford
Ms. Mary Y. Womack
Mr. Dennis Stevens
Mrs. Harris B. Peyton
Mr. Kent Stewart
Mr. & Mrs. T. H. Talbert
Mrs. Dorothy Strait
Mrs. Violet F. Taylor
Mr. David Lavern Strickland
Terry's Creek Baptist Church
Mrs. Ella Stuart
Ms. Eva E. Allen
Mr. Dale Suber
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Lee
Erna Henry Symonds
Mr. Wm. Roberts Wilson Jr.
Mark Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. Victor T. Fairburn
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Mabry
Charles Malcolm Teague
Mrs. Wilma N. Kidd
Kay Terrell
Challengers' SSC, Macedonia BC
Dr. Robert L. Thompson
Dr. and Mrs. William B. Thompson

Mr. Jimmie Thornton
Mr. & Mrs. Billy Mangold
Mr. & Mrs. E. S. Tillotson
Mr. & Mrs. Jack W. Tillotson
Mrs. Rose Mary Townsend
State Boulevard BC
Mr. & Mrs. E. Wayne Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Billy R. Barnett
Elmer Travis
Galilee Baptist Church
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Dixon
James Tucker
Mr. & Mrs. David Boyd
Bill Turner
Mr. & Mrs. Victor T. Fairburn
Lindsay & Emma Lampton
Mr. Willie Vance
Mrs. Mary H. Sherwood
Leon Vice
Mr. & Mrs. George A. Milam
Landon Von Kanel
Ruth SSC, FBC-Tupelo
Ms. Fern M. Lyter
David Guy Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Guy Walker
William P. Walker
Mr. James C. Peay
Mr. Mitchell Walters
Ms. Carrie Kimbrough
Eddy & Angie McGinnis
Jessie Rae Warner
Ruth SSC, Juniper Grove BC
Earl Warren
Mr. & Mrs. Byron Kyle
Mr. Cooper Watkins
Mr. & Mrs. Larry W. Lee
Grady Watkins
Encouragers SSC, Highland BC
Rev. Wilbur Webb
Mrs. Fannye Pollan
Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Fuqua
Mrs. Jean R. Owen
Mrs. Elisabeth (Libby) Patterson
Mr. Buddy Wheeler
Jim, Cindy & Ryan McCurdy
Maudine White
Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Pugh
Mrs. Clara Lee White
Mr. & Mrs. Halbert L. Kirk
Mrs. Maudine H. White
Ms. Elma Heffner
Mr. Clarence L. Wilkinson, Jr.
Miss Charline Killebrew
Mr. Burt Darden
Dr. & Mrs. Prentiss G. Cox
Mr. A. G. Williams, Jr.
Mrs. Anna W. Simmons
Lindsay & Emma Lampton
Mrs. Fanny K. Williams
Mr. & Mrs. C. B. Sledge
Bill Williamson
Mrs. Lynn G. Hardage
Mr. Earl Wilson
Mr. & Mrs. David Denson
Mrs. Hazel Wilson
Mr. Norman Weathersby Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Clarence Minyard
Mr. J. M. Wood
Dr. & Mrs. Wilson Moak
J. M. Woolington
Bud & Charlotte Vickers
Jansen Wright
Paul, Becky & John Paul Jackson
Rev. Jimmy Young
Mr. Danny Young

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year
from
Mississippi's Largest Family

The Acteens for First Church Madison, hosted a Christmas party for the girls of Quarles Cottage at the India Nunnery Campus on December 14, 2001.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
copyright 1999

GTJ ZNKE IUTYOJKX TUZ
OT ZNKOX NKGXZY
ZNGZ O XKSXSHKX GRR
ZNKOX COIQKJTKYY; TUC
ZNKOX UCT JUOTMY
NGBK HKYKZ ZNKS
GHUAZ; ZNKE GXK
HKLUXK SE LGIK.

NUYKG YBKBT: ZCU

Clue: T = N

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Daniel Five: Five.

'Lord of the Rings' rings of Christian Lord

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Near the end of his life, J.R.R. Tolkien (also spelled Tolkein) received a letter from a young girl posing a question concerning the chief end of man. Tolkien, author of The Lord of the Rings trilogy which has now become a motion picture, provided the youngster an answer that lends insight into the worldview of the realm in which he casts his fantasy novels.

"It may be said that the purpose of life for any one of us is to increase according to our capacity, our knowledge of God by all the means we have and to be moved by it to praise and thanks," he wrote. "[To God we must say,] 'We praise you, we call you holy, we worship you, we proclaim your glory, we thank you for the greatness of your splendor.'"

Tolkien's three-book fantasy series — written in the 1940s and 50s — are now the subject of a movie trilogy, the first installment of which arrived in theatres on Dec. 19. The remaining two parts will be released during the holiday season over the next two years.

In a lecture on the life of Tolkien, James Parker, professor of worldview and culture at Southern Seminary in Louisville, said the movie will serve as fruitful viewing for Christians.

"He operates out of a thoroughgoing trinitarian worldview and (he) says that very explicitly, plainly, and bluntly on several occasions," Parker said. "He has a traditionalist Catholic worldview, which means his doctrine of God, his doctrine of the Trinity, and his Christology were totally orthodox."

"I have differences with him because of his positions on soteriology (the doctrine of salvation) and ecclesiology (the doctrine of the church), but in terms of his trinitarian formulation of the doctrine of God, there would be no differences (between Protestants and Catholics) because of his historical orthodox expressions of those doctrines."

"In fact, he says himself that The Lord of the Rings grows out of this fundamental belief system," he said.

Parker said the most obvious declaration of Christianity in the trilogy is found in another book by Tolkien, The

Silmarilion. In it, Tolkien details the historical background of Middle Earth — the fictional world in which the story of The Lord of the Rings takes place.

In The Silmarilion, Tolkien speaks of The One who is the Creator of the universe and everything in it. This parallels the Genesis creation account, Parker said.

The providence of God is also obvious throughout The Lord of the Rings because Tolkien's Middle Earth is clearly a moral universe with a set of universal absolutes regarding right and wrong, good and evil, he said.

"Not only is God superintending Tolkien's Middle Earth, but he is governing it according to his will and accomplishing his own ends; this comes through in many places in the story," he said.

It was Tolkien who, as a professor of Anglo-Saxon language at Oxford University, led a colleague to embrace Christ in 1929. The colleague was C.S. Lewis, who would go on to become a stalwart apologist for the Christian faith.

It was Tolkien's view of myth — that it is always grounded in the reality of the transcendent God, (even if subtly) — that ultimately shattered the barriers to Christianity for Lewis.

"Tolkien did not mean by 'myth' that it is defined as 'non-historical,'" Parker said,



LORD OF THE RINGS — The Lord of the Rings hero, Frodo Baggins, is portrayed by actor Elijah Wood. Lord of the Rings, based on the novel by J.R.R. Tolkien, opened in theaters Dec. 19. The novels were written from a Christian worldview, according to Southern Seminary professor James Parker. (Photo courtesy of www.lordoftherings.net)

"but that it exhibits certain characteristics, certain ideas, recurring themes such as the dying and rising God, the sense of the moral universe behind things."

"Lewis said when he read the Gospels, he felt like he was reading a myth because it contained mythical elements but ultimately, he knew it was fact. This was the 'true myth' that was absolutely true and historical."

Can the Tolkien movie bridge the gap between Christians and non-Christians in a way that will enable believers to proclaim the saving Gospel of God? Parker feels confident that the movie — with its patently theistic world, albeit a make-believe one — will do just that.

New York Times spotlights disaster relief vols

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP and local reports) — Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts in New York have captured the

attention of the New York Times, which ran a lengthy article on the ongoing apartment cleanup project. The article — titled Doing Good Deeds, and Windows — leads with comments from volunteer John Gore, one of about 1,000 volunteers who have helped clean out dust and other debris from apartments adjacent to the former site of the World Trade Center.

The cleanup ministry idea was hatched by Mississippi Baptist disaster relief volunteers who spent Thanksgiving week fulfilling ministry roles in New York City. They located commercial vacuum equipment, put together cleaning supplies, and began the ministry during their stay there. An additional story on the cleanup ministry aired on ABC television network news.

Volunteer Gore showed the newspaper reporter all the pins on his hat representing disaster relief locations where he has worked. "Many members of this God squad are veterans of other cleanups — hurricanes in Honduras, mudslides in Venezuela," the article states. "This mission is a first because they are clearing glass, airline parts, and acres of dust rather than tree limbs or mud. But, just as is the case at third-world disaster sites, the Baptists do not take money for their work."

"Armed with high-performance vacuum cleaners, mops, and cans of Pledge, they have cleaned 500 apartments so far, top to

bottom," the article continues. "They do windows and just about anything else."

Accompanying the story are photos of both the cleanup in progress, as well as volunteers in prayer during one of the nightly debriefing/devotional sessions. The article describes not only how volunteers clean apartments, but also how volunteers from the South are quickly adapting to life in the city and how their positive reputation has grown among the residents.

"Indeed, when one downtown resident was told that a crew from New England was arriving to clean his apartment he balked," according to Bob Helms, who heads the volunteer effort. "I don't want Yankees," Helms quoted him as saying. "I want those Southern Baptists."

One resident, according to the article, was quoted \$1,800 for a commercial cleaning service to do the work the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers did for free.

The article also examined how volunteers seemed to take in stride the austere accommodations in a former Navy jail in Brooklyn. "We're used to third-world countries," Ms. [Wanda] Smith [of Nashville] said gamely. "So we're used to these kinds of accommodations."

The full text of the article is available online at www.nytimes.com/2001/12/04/nyregion/04BAPT.html.



CLEANING MINISTRY — Kay Cassibry, executive director of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, wears a special suit and breathing apparatus as she helps clean an apartment in the area of the World Trade Towers collapse in New York City. Mississippi Baptist volunteers developed the novel apartment cleaning ministry while they were in New York City during Thanksgiving week, serving as members of the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force. (Photo by Jim Didlake)